

# Contemporary Aesthetics (Journal Archive)

---

Volume 9 *Volume 9 (2011)*

Article 3

---

2011

## Recent Publications

Follow this and additional works at: [https://digitalcommons.risd.edu/liberalarts\\_contempaesthetics](https://digitalcommons.risd.edu/liberalarts_contempaesthetics)



Part of the [Aesthetics Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

(2011) "Recent Publications," *Contemporary Aesthetics (Journal Archive)*: Vol. 9 , Article 3.  
Available at: [https://digitalcommons.risd.edu/liberalarts\\_contempaesthetics/vol9/iss1/3](https://digitalcommons.risd.edu/liberalarts_contempaesthetics/vol9/iss1/3)

This Recent Publications is brought to you for free and open access by the Liberal Arts Division at DigitalCommons@RISD. It has been accepted for inclusion in Contemporary Aesthetics (Journal Archive) by an authorized editor of DigitalCommons@RISD. For more information, please contact [mpompeli@risd.edu](mailto:mpompeli@risd.edu).

[About CA](#)

[Journal](#)

[Contact CA](#)

[Links](#)

[Submissions](#)

[Search Journal](#)

[Editorial Board](#)

[Permission to Reprint](#)

[Privacy](#)

[Site Map](#)

[Publisher](#)

[Webmaster](#)

## Recent Publications

*Contemporary Aesthetics* does not publish book reviews. However, to inform our readers of new publications of interest, we do publish brief descriptions extracted from information provided by the publishers. These notices do not necessarily represent the views or judgment of this journal. Readers are invited to send us such information about books they think will interest other readers of *CA*.

---

Stephen Davies, *Musical Understandings* (Oxford University Press, 2011), 221 pp.  
ISBN 9780199608775

*Musical Understandings* presents an engaging collection of essays on the philosophy of music, including how music expresses emotion and what is distinctive to the listener's response to this expressiveness; the modes of perception and understanding that can be expected of skilled listeners, performers, analysts, and composers, and the various manners in which these understandings can be manifest; the manner in which musical works exist and their relation to their instances or performances; and musical profundity. As well as reviewing the work of philosophers of music, a number of the chapters both draw on and critically reflect on current work by psychologists concerning music. The collection includes new material, a number of adapted articles which allow for a more comprehensive, unified treatment of the issues at stake, and work published in English for the first time.

*Law and Art: Justice, Ethics and Aesthetics*, ed. Oren Ben-Dor (Routledge-Cavendish, 2011), 320 pp.  
ISBN 9780415560214

In engaging with the full range of the arts, contributors to this volume consider the relationship between law, justice, the ethical and the aesthetic. Art continually informs the ethics of a legal theory through its concern to address how theoretical abstractions and concrete oppressions overlook singularity and spontaneity. Indeed, the exercise of the legal role and the scholarly understanding of legal texts were classically defined as *ars iuris*, an art of law, and the intent of this book is to elicit the importance of the relationship between law and art.

What can law and art bring to one another, and what can their relationship tell us about how truth relates to power?

The insights presented in this collection disturb and supplement conventional accounts of justice, inaugurating new possibilities for addressing the origin of violence in our world.

Jacques Rancière, *Mute Speech*, transl. James Swenson (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011), 194 pp.  
ISBN 9780231151030

Jacques Rancière has continually unsettled political discourse through his questioning of aesthetic “distributions on the sensible,” which configure the limits of what can be seen and said. *Mute Speech* proposes a new framework for thinking about the history of art and literature. Rancière argues that our current notion of “literature” is a relatively recent creation, having first appeared in the wake of the French Revolution and with the rise of Romanticism. In its rejection of the system of representational hierarchies that had constituted belles-lettres, “literature” is founded upon a radical equivalence in which all things are possible expressions of the life of a people. With an analysis reaching back to Plato, Aristotle, the German Romantics, Vico, and Cervantes and concluding with readings of Flaubert, Mallarmé, and Proust, Rancière demonstrates the democratic impulse lying at the heart of literature’s capacity for reinvention.

Veikko Rantala, *Aesthetic Tension, Cognitive Aspects of Interpretation* (Peter Lang, 2011), 242 pp.  
ISBN 9783631619131

This essay is an interdisciplinary study of what is cognitively going on when we interpret, represent, or evaluate cultural entities, including works of art. The role of interpretation in experience and in cultural objects is elucidated from a cognitive point of view. The book relies on theories of action, perception, possible worlds, possibility and necessity, intentionality, cognition, and brain research. It contains a number of examples confirming what is said in its theoretical parts. Joining theories and concrete examples yields new explanatory insights into some much-discussed aesthetic problems related to interpretation. One observation is that cognitive theories can be used to dissolve the disagreement about two philosophical traditions, analytic and continental.

*Between Art and Anthropology, Contemporary Ethnographic Practice*, eds. Arnd Schneider and Christopher Wright (London: Berg Publishers, 2011), 224 pp.  
ISBN 9781847885005

Artists and anthropologists share a set of common practices that raise similar ethical issues. *Between Art and Anthropology* considers contemporary art and anthropology in terms of fieldwork practice. The book encourages artists and anthropologists to learn directly from each other's practices 'in the field.' It goes beyond the so-called 'ethnographic turn' of much contemporary art and the 'crisis of representation' in anthropology to explore the implications of the new anthropology of the senses and ethical issues for future art-anthropology collaborations.

*Subversive Strategies in Contemporary Chinese Art*, eds. Mary Bittner Wiseman and Liu Yuedi (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 417 pp.  
ISBN: 978-90-04-187955

What is art and what is its role in a China that is changing

rapidly? These questions lie at the heart of Chinese contemporary art. *Subversive Strategies* paves the way for the rebirth of a Chinese aesthetics adequate to the art whose sheer energy and imaginative power are subverting the ideas through which Western and Chinese critics think about art. The first collection of essays by American and Chinese philosophers and art historians, *Subversive Strategies* begins by showing how the art reflects current crises and is working them out through bodies that are gendered and political. The essays proceed to raise the question of Chinese identity and a global world and note a blurring of the boundary between art and everyday life.

*Heroes, Monsters and Values: Science Fiction Films of the 1970's*, eds., Michael Berman and Rohit Dalvi (Cambridge Scholars Publishing (2011), 210 pp. ISBN 978-1-4438-2692-1

This international anthology brings together many diverse views on blockbuster and cult science fiction films of the 1970's. These essays, which range in focus from *Alien* to *Zardoz*, explore some of the most fundamental questions about the meaning of human being. The chapters of the first section challenge our notions of heroism, confronting our ideas with issues of history, gender and embodiment. The second section delves into the human caused monstrosities of our own ingenuity and curiosity in which our technology transforms the human into a source of horror. The anthology's final section speaks to the cinematic depictions that disrupt our religious and moral assumptions.

Eran Guter, *Aesthetics A- Z*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, January 2011), 237 pp. ISBN 9780748623402

Written in a clear and engaging style, *Aesthetics A-Z* provides authoritative coverage of the main concepts, arguments, problems and key figures in aesthetics and the philosophy of art. Informative entries, extensively cross-referenced and supplemented with carefully chosen suggestions for further reading, provide a layered treatment of both historical background and contemporary debates in aesthetics, and underline points of intersection between aesthetics and other branches of philosophy or other fields that study the arts.